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FAIRA Aboriginal Corporation  
37 Balaclava Street  
Woolloongabba 4102  
Brisbane, Queensland, Australia  
[www.faira.org.au](http://www.faira.org.au)

**AGENDA ITEM 4f): EDUCATION**

Statement by Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action (FAIRA)  
Les Malezer - [les.malezer@faira.org.au](mailto:les.malezer@faira.org.au)

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Thank you, Mr Chairman

In our intervention during this Session, under Item 3 on Youth and Children, we recommended that UNICEF and UNESCO assist States to develop plans of action to reduce racial stereotyping through the media and other institutions, and to promote greater awareness of the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We now provide further recommendations, on Education, to address issues of racial discrimination against Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We note that the World Conference Against Racism recommends, in the Durban Declaration that States commit funds for anti-racism education and media campaigns that promote tolerance and respect for the histories and cultures of Indigenous Peoples. (World Conference Against Racism, 'Durban Declaration', Para 117)

The Declaration also seeks that States commit resources to eliminate inequalities in educational outcomes for Indigenous children and young people, and support safe school environments, free from violence and harassment motivated by racial discrimination. States must also ensure that Indigenous Peoples can learn their own language as a means of protection from racial discrimination. (ibid. Paras 123 & 124)

We consider it imperative that human rights education is provided to all youth in Australia. The Durban Declaration has specific recommendations that should be positively received by the Australian Government.

The Australian Government should, for example, require the implementation of anti-racism programs in school curricula, require the improvement of relevant educational material such as history, and ensure that all teachers are effectively trained to shape attitudes based on principles of non-discrimination, mutual respect and tolerance;

It is imperative in a colonized country such as Australia, where the legal rights of the Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have not been fully recognized, that the Australian Government actively promote activities to educate the young population in human rights and democratic citizenship.

The Australian Government should instill in all its citizens the values of solidarity, respect and appreciation of diversity, including respect for the Indigenous Peoples; and the Australian Government must make a special effort to fight against any ideologies based on the fallacious theory of racial superiority. (ibid. Paras 129 & 130)

The Durban Declaration makes it clear that the Australian Government ought to initiate and develop cultural and educational programs to counter racism, to ensure respect for the dignity and worth of all human beings and enhance mutual understanding between Australian citizens and the Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This should be done in cooperation with the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other relevant international organizations.

These measures should also include public information campaigns and specific training programs to promote respect 'for the values of diversity, pluralism, tolerance, mutual respect, cultural sensitivity, integration and inclusiveness'.

Further the Australian Government ought to intensify its efforts in education to promote an awareness of the causes, consequences and evils of racism.

The Australian Government must encourage educational authorities and the private sector to develop educational materials, including textbooks and dictionaries, aimed at combating racism, and give importance to textbook and curriculum review, to eliminate any elements that might promote racism or reinforce negative stereotypes. (ibid. Paras 126 & 127)

It is also important the Australian Government develop anti-racism human rights training for public officials and professionals, including those people employed in the administration of justice, law enforcement and correctional services.

The Australian Government must pay specific attention to the negative impact of racism on the administration of justice and fair trial. All government instrumentalities and public officials should be given training concerning their obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and international norms prohibiting racial discrimination. Prosecutors, members of the judiciary and other public officials should be made fully aware of the conventions and norms, and their applicability in domestic law. (ibid. Paras 133 & 134)

We make these recommendations, Mr Chairman, as a conclusion to the statements that we have presented under each of the topics on the Agenda for this Session of the Permanent Forum. We would hope the Australian Government will be prepared to adopt these proposals in the process of preparing a national plan of action, as recommended in the Durban Declaration.

Thank you, Mr Chairman

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